

**Cover email text:** I'm really disappointed to see that fixed charges are being proposed to be increased and the whole incentive system supporting the solar and battery industry is potentially being undermined. This has prompted me to complete my own submission. I'm happy to be consulted directly if you require any further information.

# Submission to the Australian Energy Market Commission (AEMC)

## Electricity Pricing Review – Consumer-Driven Future

Date: 12 February 2026

### Submitted by:

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Network: Ausgrid (NSW)

Retailer: Amber Electric

### 1. Position

I strongly oppose any increase in fixed daily electricity network charges. Electricity pricing should remain usage-based and cost-reflective. Consumers who use more energy — particularly at times that place strain on the grid — should pay more. Conversely, consumers who reduce demand, shift usage to low-stress periods, and supply energy back to the grid at critical times should be rewarded. Increasing fixed charges weakens these signals and risks undermining the consumer-led transition already underway.

### 2. Household Investment in Distributed Energy

Across three properties in NSW, my family has made substantial private investments to reduce grid strain and support the energy transition.

- Approximately ██████████ of rooftop solar across three properties (██████████ each).
- ██████████ of battery storage across three properties (██████████ systems).
- Electric vehicle charging infrastructure.
- An electric vehicle charged flexibly in response to wholesale price and renewable supply conditions.

These investments were made deliberately in response to pricing signals encouraging consumer participation in the energy system. Across our properties, we export electricity during peak periods, charge batteries and our electric vehicle during low-price and high-renewable periods, reduce peak demand through battery discharge, and respond dynamically to real-time pricing. This has materially reduced our reliance on the grid and lowered overall annual electricity costs that were previously in the range of ██████████ across the three properties. With ██████████ of battery storage deployed behind the meter, we are capable of significantly reducing peak demand and supplying energy during periods of system stress.

### 3. Concerns Regarding Higher Fixed Charges

Increasing fixed daily network charges would undermine the efficiency of the current pricing framework.

- They reduce cost reflectivity by weakening the link between consumption behaviour and network cost recovery.
- They weaken incentives for private investment in solar, batteries and flexible demand technologies.
- They create cross-subsidies where efficient households may subsidise higher-usage households.
- They slow decarbonisation and distributed energy integration by diluting dynamic price signals.

The consumer response to time-based and dynamic pricing has been real and measurable. Diluting those signals risks reversing progress.

#### **4. Principles for a Consumer-Driven Future**

Pricing structures should:

- Maintain low fixed charges.
- Strengthen time-of-use and dynamic pricing.
- Reflect peak network congestion and system stress.
- Reward demand shifting and peak exports.
- Recognise the system value of distributed energy resources.

Consumers who impose higher costs on the network should pay more, and consumers who reduce system stress and provide energy at critical times should be financially rewarded. This aligns with economic efficiency, fairness and long-term system sustainability.

#### **5. Closing**

Households like mine have invested heavily in distributed energy infrastructure in response to policy settings that promote consumer participation and efficiency. A shift toward higher fixed charges risks undermining those investments and weakening the behavioural signals that support peak reduction, renewable integration and system stability. I respectfully urge the AEMC to prioritise cost-reflective, usage-based pricing structures and avoid increasing fixed daily charges in a way that discourages consumer participation in the energy transition.